

the establishment, one familiar voice could be heard above all others, singing, shouting, swearing.

"Pop?" The immature voice squeaked only loud enough to be heard by its owner. Again, the one word inquiry was uttered, this time louder. The familiar voice from inside became even more familiar as a blurry-eyed bulk of fatherhood wavered toward the door in answer to the call.

"C'mon, Pop. Let's go home."

A Land of Opportunity

James Stainbrook

ALMOST two centuries ago the thirteen English colonies declared their independence and built the foundation for their unification as an independent and democratic nation. The words, "all men are created free and equal," are exemplificative of the ideals embodied in this simple, yet eloquent, declaration drafted by Thomas Jefferson. Obviously, the founding fathers of the United States desired this nation to be a land of opportunity for all men. They expressed this desire in the preamble to the Constitution—"We the people of the United States of America in order to form a more perfect union, . . . secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States further established the principles of personal liberties and opportunities for all citizens by declaring that no state should "make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." After examining the principles which these two documents so articulately express, one cannot help being cognizant of the fact that America was meant to be a land of opportunity for all.

Since the founding of this nation, many people of various races and nationalities have come to its shores seeking an opportunity to live, work, and study as they think best. Many of these persons have played significant roles in the building of this great country. There may be some significance to the fact that one of the first men to die in the struggle of the colonies for their independence was a Negro, Crispus Attucks. True, freedom and liberty have not always come easily to those who have sought them. Nevertheless, the very difficulties endured by those who have advocated and worked for the ideals upon which America was founded serve to make the American heritage more meaningful. These ideals have often been opposed by those who would limit "the pursuit of happiness" to a particular group. This opposition once erupted in civil war; the United States was divided into two hostile camps, those who remembered that all men were created free and equal and those who felt that some men were created to be slaves. Abraham Lincoln reiter-

ated the ideals embodied in the foundation of our government when he issued his Emancipation Proclamation.

With the abolition of slavery, it would seem that America should truly be a land of equal opportunity for all men. Is it? Recently an intelligent and attractive Negro girl applied for admission to a Southern university. Reluctantly the college officials granted her admission, and she attended her first classes. It seems that there are some, however, who feel that attendance in certain tax-supported schools should be limited to members of the white race only. After demonstrations by individuals who displayed the characteristics of "literate morons," this girl was forced to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. Even after a decision by the court to readmit the student to the university, she was harassed by persons who, in many cases, had no connection with the college. All of these things were bad, but perhaps the worst was yet to come, for the university officials themselves, some of the intellectual leaders of this country, saw fit to expel the Negro student on the pretense that she had made slanderous statements concerning them. This, of course, is a single incident, yet it seems to be typical of incidents which occur too often to be ignored. Whatever the outcome of this case, it is quite evident that at the present time, in some states, at least, there are not equal opportunities for all citizens.

The United States has always led in promoting the brotherhood of man, yet one soon realizes that America is not a Utopia and that there are still Americans who shelter in their hearts prejudices against and hatred for members of races or nationalities other than their own. How can America more closely approach the ideals upon which she was founded? Booker T. Washington, a capable Negro scientist and educator, was aware of the problems presented by racial animosities and suspicions. In the address he gave at the opening of the Atlanta Exposition, he expressed the opinion that artificial forcing of the struggle for social and economic equality would not solve the problem; he did feel, however, that patience and hard work would do much to alleviate it. Booker T. Washington seemed to be asking the radicals of both the white and colored races to go slow. Albert Einstein, another great American scientist, concluded that we will have true peace only when there is a change in the hearts of men. I feel certain that this same truth applies to the problem of assuring all Americans equal opportunities. When men begin to have "understanding in their minds and feeling in their hearts," then they will better appreciate the American heritage of liberty and freedom for all. Each of us must strive to understand and sympathize with our fellow men and their problems. If America is actually to be a land of opportunity for all of its citizens, each American must be conscious of incidents such as the one involving the Negro college student and exert all the influence possible to prevent the occurrence of similar incidents.